

FOGARTY INTERNATIONAL CENTER  
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR  
Sixtieth meeting of the FIC Advisory Board  
Tuesday, May 24, 2005

CALL TO ORDER/WELCOME/OPENING REMARKS  
CONSIDERATION OF MINUTES OF FEBRUARY 2005 MEETING  
FUTURE MEETING DATES

Confirmed:

Tuesday, September 13, 2005

Tuesday, February 7, 2006

Tuesday, May 23, 2006

Tuesday, September 12, 2006

(Advisory Board Subcommittees meet on the Monday preceding the full Board meeting.)

**PERSONNEL ANNOUNCEMENTS**

David A. Schwartz, M.D., from Duke University was selected as the new director of NIEHS and the National Toxicology Program. His appointment was effective on May 23. Dr. Schwartz was most recently director of the Pulmonary, Allergy, and Critical Care Division and vice chair of Research in the Department of Medicine at Duke University. At Duke, he was instrumental in the establishment of three interdisciplinary Centers in Environmental Health Sciences, Environmental Genomics and Environmental Asthma. NIEHS has supported his research since 1990.

Antonio Scarpa, M.D., Ph.D., from Case Western Reserve University in Cleveland, Ohio was selected as the new director of the Center for Scientific Review (CSR). Dr. Scarpa was previously the David and Inez Myers professor and chair of the Department of Physiology and Biophysics at Case Western Reserve University. Dr. Scarpa will replace Brent Stanfield, Ph.D., who became acting director of CSR since October 2003, following the departure of Ellie Ehrenfeld, Ph.D. Dr. Scarpa will join NIH on July 1, 2005. He has conducted biophysical research into the cellular and molecular mechanisms of ion transport and homeostasis and the metabolic consequences induced by transport. His investigations have been supported by grants from the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute; the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism; and the National Institute of Diabetes and Digestive and Kidney Diseases.

## **BUDGET**

**NIH FY 2006 Budget Request:** The President's FY 2006 budget request for the NIH is \$28.740 billion, an increase of \$146 million or .5 percent over the FY 2005 appropriated level of \$28.594 billion. Within this level, the budget request for the AIDS program is \$2.933 billion, an increase of \$12 million or .4 percent over the FY 2005 level of \$2.921 billion. The budget request includes increases for the NIH Roadmap, which is comprised of three broad initiatives: New Pathways to Discovery, Multidisciplinary Research Teams of the Future and Re-engineering the Clinical Research Enterprise; the NIH Blueprint for Neuroscience Research; and biodefense research.

**FIC FY 2006 Budget Request:** The FY 2006 budget request for the FIC is \$67.048 million, an increase of \$.416 million or .6 percent over the FY 2005 level of \$66.632 million. Within this level, the non-AIDS budget is \$43.838 million, an increase of \$.191 million or .4 percent. The AIDS budget is \$23.21 million, an increase of \$.225 million or 1 percent. Emphasis areas in FY 2006 include the Framework Programs for Global Health, the NIH Alumni Associations abroad, the global burden of obesity, and efforts in the neurosciences.

The FY 2006 Congressional Justification can be found on the FIC web site at <http://www.fic.nih.gov/about/testimony.html>.

### **Hearings:**

Dr. Zerhouni, Director, NIH testified on behalf of the FY 2006 President's budget before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on March 9 and before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on April 6. Each IC Director submitted a written opening statement to the House and Senate Appropriations Subcommittees. Dr. Hrynkow's statement can be found on the FIC web site at <http://www.fic.nih.gov/about/testimony.html>.

## **FIC/NIH MAJOR EVENTS**

### **AIDS International Training and Research Program Network Meeting**

One of the hallmarks of the FIC extramural programs are the regular network meetings to allow PIs and trainees across the programs to share information on lessons learned and best practices, and to receive updates and information from program staff. The AIDS International Training and Research Program (AITRP) network meeting was held in NYC from May 17-18. Among topics considered this year were: Monitoring and evaluation needs for treatment scale-up; AITRP interfaces with CDC, PEPFAR and UNAIDS; What should AITRP look like in the next 20 years?; and How to help returning trainees become leaders for tomorrow. Results of these discussions benefit the AITRP leaders and inform FIC staff on potential program directions and opportunities.

### **International Women's Day**

FIC and the NIH Office of Research on Women's Health (ORWH) hosted an International

Women's Day Celebration on March 8 to honor international women scientists working on the NIH campus. The three scientists who shared their perspectives on their scientific work and their career paths were Dr. Grace Yeh (Taiwan), the National Cancer Institute; Dr. Maria Morasso (Venezuela), the National Institute of Arthritis and Musculoskeletal and Skin Diseases; and Dr. Linda Peters (New Zealand), the National Institute on Deafness and other Communication Disorders. Dr. Elias Zerhouni, NIH Director, joined FIC Acting Director Hrynkow and ORWH Director Dr. Vivian Pinn in providing comments about the import of the event.

#### Conflict of Interest Supplemental Ethics Regulations

Dr. Elias Zerhouni, the NIH Director, testified before the Senate Appropriations Subcommittee on Labor, Health and Human Services, Education, and Related Agencies on April 5, 2005 on the impact of the new interim final supplemental ethics regulations, developed by the Department of Health and Human Services and the Office of Government Ethics, in consultation with the NIH. The new regulation covered three broad areas: outside activities, prizes/awards and stock holdings. Dr. Zerhouni stated that the moratorium on outside consultations was necessary because the ethics management system was not functional and some of the activities engaged in by staff truly did not advance research. He strongly urged that the regulations be subject to comments and evaluations and adjustments. The requirement that NIH employees divest of stocks held in selected pharmaceutical and biotechnology companies was a particular concern because of the negative impact such a ruling could have on staff retention and recruitment efforts for key leadership and other positions.

On May 12, 2005 the NIH Director informed staff that the public comment period on the interim final ethic regulations was closed—NIH received more than 800 emails and HHS had received more than 1,000. He also indicated that he would work with senior HHS staff, OGE officials, and others to formulate the appropriate adjustments to the new ethics regulations and to put them in place, conceivably within the next few weeks.

#### 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual Career Fair for Visiting Fellows

FIC led the trans-NIH effort for a second year in a row to convene the 2<sup>nd</sup> annual career fair for visiting fellows. Working with co-sponsors National Institute of Environmental Health Sciences, the NIH Office of Intramural Research, FelCom, and the NIH Visiting Fellows Committee the event was held on Tuesday, May 17, 2005 in the Clinical Center Atrium (Building 10) of the NIH campus. This year, 36 organizations participated as presenters, including 18 embassies and 18 international organizations or NGOs. This was up from 25 total last year. While no official counts were taken, participation of Fellows seemed higher than last year. Many FIC staff participated in making this event a success but special kudos go to Dr. Jean Flagg-Newton, Special Assistant, Office of the Director, and Ms. Sonja Madera, Program Specialist, Division of International Relations.

#### FIC convened the NIH IC International Reps meeting on May 10

Guests included Dr. Torsten Wiesel, Rockefeller University and Dr. Sari Nesseibeh, President, Al Quds University; Mr. Kenneth R. Fulton, Executive Director, National Academy of Sciences; John F. Galbraith, President and Chief Executive Officer, Catholic Medical Mission Board

(CMMB) and Dr. Rabia Mathai, CMMB. Drs. Wiesel and Nesseibeh provided an update on the Israeli-Palestinian Science Organization, a grant-making body aimed at bringing Israeli and Palestinian scientists together around common scientific challenges. Mr. Fulton described the National Academy's Frontiers of Science (FoS) program which brings together emerging scientific leaders from around the world to discuss complex scientific problems in an interdisciplinary fashion. Mr. Galbraith and Dr. Mathai discussed the mission of CMMB and the findings of a recently published study: Examining the Role of Faith-Based Organizations in Addressing HIV/AIDS. Dr. Mathai noted that a significant amount of health delivery in poor countries is provided by faith-based groups, and that there is interest in partnering more broadly with research organizations to more fully address the spectrum of needs. FIC and NIH international offices will continue to explore potential cooperation with each of these groups through all available mechanisms.

#### Expanding our Vision of Vision Research

FIC and the National Eye Institute teamed up to support an NIH presentation by Dr. Dorairajan Balasubramanian, one of the leading vision researchers in India and former director of the Indian Medical Research Council. His presentation on "Life Sciences in Research in India" drew an NIH audience of more than 150 scientists. Interest and enthusiasm for strengthening the relationship with India is high. On the vision area, the NEI, with an assist from FIC, is working on a Letter of Intent with counterparts in India aimed at expanding research in the vision field. This agreement is expected to be signed in the June-July timeframe.

#### FIC/National Science Foundation Workshop

On May 17, FIC and the National Science Foundation hosted a consultation of technical experts under the auspices of the heads of research agencies from NIH, the UK, France, Japan, Switzerland, Canada, and Sweden to consider the broad topic of ecology of infectious diseases. FIC launched a program in November 1999 to consider ecology and infectious disease, with NIH partners—NIAID, NIEHS and NIGMS, the NSF and the U.S. Geological Survey. Two Ecology of Infectious Disease Program grantees also participated in the consultation. The purpose of the consultation was to take stock of lessons learned from 5 years of experience with the EID program and to consider how science funding agencies around the world could work more closely together on this topic. A report from the consultation will be presented to NIH Director Zerhouni and his counterparts from abroad in June.

#### Upcoming: Suicide Prevention Research Conference – Durban South Africa, September

FIC, NIMH, NIAAA, SAMHSA and other partners have teamed up to begin to explore the issue of best practices in suicide prevention. As one outcome, the partners will convene a series of panel discussions at the International Association for Suicide Prevention meeting to be held in Durban, South Africa in September. The goal of the panels will be to determine what best practices exist in suicide prevention around the world and to determine if FIC, NIMH and others can play a meaningful role in research and training in this area.

## SCIENCE FOR GLOBAL HEALTH

The following are illustrative of scientific and training successes supported by the FIC programs in the past several months.

Dr. Taha E. Taha at Johns Hopkins University and colleagues at the University of Malawi found that the risk of HIV mother-to-child transmission was higher for girls during pregnancy. At birth, infant girls (12%) were twice as likely than the boys (6%) to be HIV infected; and at 6-8 weeks of age, among infants not infected at birth, the increased risk for girls (10% versus 7% for boys) continued—although not as strong, indicating that the risk of transmission through breastfeeding might also be increased for female infants. Two explanations are possible. Infant girls are more susceptible to HIV infection before birth, due to yet to be determined genetic, immunological, hormonal or environmental factors. Alternatively, male and female infants may be equally susceptible, but more infected boys are likely to die before birth than girls, making HIV transmission appear higher among infant girls. These findings highlight the need for sex and gender analyses in many research studies, even when differences are not expected, if we are to better understand diseases and health conditions. (*Pediatrics* 2005; 115: 167-172)(AIDS FIRCA R03 TW001199

Dr. Christina Hofer and colleagues found, in a FIC supported study, that the proportion of patients responding to anti-retroviral therapy (ART) in Brazil was similar to reports from developed countries, suggesting that ART can be used successfully in developing countries. Variables related to adherence, knowledge and perception about ART were associated with a lack of response to ART. These findings have important implications for developing nations that are considering increased access to ART. (*J. Acquir. Immune Defic. Syndr.*, 36(4), Aug. 2004, pp. 967-971); (3 D43 TW01038, Hofer, University of Pittsburgh).

Dr. Cyril Enwonwu and colleagues at the University of Maryland School of Dentistry demonstrated a linkage between cancrum oris (noma), extremely high circulating levels of the proinflammatory cytokine, IL 18, and severe growth retardation or stunting. NOMA is a devastating infectious disease that destroys the soft and hard tissues of oral and para-oral structures. The results suggest that the development of fresh noma was programmed very early in life by malnutrition and chronic infections related to weaning from breast milk and subsequent exposure to *Fusobacterium necrophorum* (Fn), a commensal in the gut of herbivores primarily associated with diseases of domestic animals (i.e., foot rot, necrotic lesions in the oral cavity, etc.) and *Prevotella intermedia* (Pi), the putative pathogen in acute necrotizing ulcerative gingivitis usually found in progressing adult periodontitis. Although not investigated, it is speculated that children with fresh noma might also be victims of intrauterine growth retardation because noma is most prevalent during the infantile phase of child growth, which starts at mid-gestation and tails off at four years. (*Tropical Medicine & International Health*, 10(1) pp. 65-73, January 2005)(EID, Enwonwu, C.O., et.al.);

## **ACTIVITIES OF FIC ACTING DIRECTOR: DIPLOMATIC MEETINGS, SPEECHES, TRAVEL**

FIC Acting Director, Dr. Sharon Hrynkow, joined Dr. Zerhouni for a series of informational meetings with senior government officials. The purpose of these meetings is to share information on NIH and FIC programs and priorities, and to determine areas of common interest and potential joint action. Among the meetings were:

**German State Secretary for Health and Social Welfare**, Dr. Klaus Schroeder, on February 9; **Dr. Saleh Meky, Minister of Health of Eritrea** on February 9; **Jordan's Minister of Health**, Said Derwazah, on March 7; **Dr. Luis Sambo, Director of the WHO Africa Regional Office** to discuss capacity building and health systems research (with NIH Deputy Director Dr. Kington); and, **Mr. Micheal Martin, Ireland's Minister for Enterprise and Trade and Industry (and former MOH) on April 26 to discuss activities proceeding under the All-Ireland Cancer Consortium and the U.S.- Ireland R&D Partnership. Additional interests include collaboration in research on cystic fibrosis, diabetes, imaging and nanotechnology.**

Dr. Hrynkow also joined **DHHS Secretary Michael Leavitt's** discussion with Ireland's Minister for Enterprise, Trade and Industry, Mr. Micheal Martin, and she led the NIH delegation meeting with the **Ukrainian First Lady Mrs. Kateryna Yushchenko** on April 4. Mrs. Yushchenko visited Washington with her husband for a state visit. She noted that her number one priority as First Lady was to improve the health of the Ukrainian people. Joining the meeting with Mrs. Yushchenko were **NIDA Director Dr. Nora Volkow**; **Dr. Faye Calhoun, Deputy Director, NIAAA**; and **Drs. Ihor Masnyk and Alina Brenner from NCI.**

Dr. Hrynkow met with a delegation of **Members from the Brazilian Congress** on February 25 to discuss NIH-Brazil opportunities for future research collaboration and to review current collaborative activities and with Dr. Jenő Rácz, **Minister of Health from Hungary** on April 4 as part of a series of FIC-organized meetings that included Dr. Elizabeth Nabel, Dr. John Gallin, and NCI staff to discuss opportunities for advancing efforts under the US-Hungary Health Agreement signed in January 2005. This was the second visit of Minister of Health to the NIH in 4 months. Among the items that will be pursued will be a FIC-organized session on the NIH grants system for Hungarian SRAs.

Dr. Hrynkow met with Professor Chen Zhu, **Vice President, Chinese Academy of Science (CAS)** to discuss joint interests and strategies for increasing the exchange of scientists between the US and China. Information on FIC's Global Health Research Initiative Program (GRIP) was shared; several Chinese scientists are now supported via this program. The CAS will explore the possibility of enhancing the GRIP program with additional CAS support. She also met with Dr. Manto Tshabalala Msimang, **Minister of Health of South Africa**, and her team on March 2 to provide an overview of NIH research collaborations, including HIV/AIDS research, and research training programs in South Africa. The Minister met with **NIAID Director Dr. Anthony Fauci** and other NIH leaders during her visit. Dr. Hrynkow met with Dr. Peter Gregson, **Vice Chancellor, Queen's University of Belfast**, on April 8 to discuss health research issues of mutual interest in Northern Ireland.

Dr. Hrynkow met on behalf of Dr. Zerhouni with the **Science Advisor to the Secretary of State**, Dr. George Atkinson, on May 20, to discuss potential means of expanding the US-EU relationship in science. Dr. Hrynkow continues to represent NIH on the **DHHS Global Health Policy Core Group**, which met on April 25, and the **US-EC Task Force on Biotechnology**, led by NSF.

#### Presentations/Speeches

Dr. Hrynkow addressed Dr. Zerhouni and all NIH Institute and Center Directors and NIH Office of the Director on May 12. Her talk was entitled “From John Fogarty to Margaret Mead and Beyond: A Vignette.” Other major presentations include:

Led a panel discussion on “**Science and Global Health Disasters**” at the AAAS annual S & T meeting on April 21. Speakers included Dr. Henry Masur, NIH Clinical Center, on AIDS; Dr. Ali Khan, CDC on anthrax, SARS and tsunami-related challenges, and Dr. Irina Dardynskaia, University of Illinois/Chicago (and part of FIC’s ITREOH program) on the Chernobyl disaster.

Led a panel on “**Responding to Infectious Diseases: National Security or Human Rights**” at a colloquium on Health and Foreign Policy sponsored by the Academy for Educational Development.

Presented at the **Hungarian embassy’s “Homecoming Forum,”** an annual event to provide information to Hungarians wishing to return home to pursue scientific work. Dr. Hrynkow spoke on NIH international activities, FIC programs, and NIH cooperation with the European Union.

#### Travel

Dr. Hrynkow was an invited guest at a Veterans Administration consultation held at the Rhode Island Veterans Administration Hospital. The purpose of the consultation was to explore rehabilitation research and training opportunities involving VA and other partners. FIC continues to explore opportunities to work more closely with the VA through its Trauma and Injury and other programs.

Dr. Hrynkow represented NIH as an Observer at the annual meeting of the European Medical Research Councils. This year’s meeting was held in The Hague, Netherlands April 28 – 29.

### **FIC PROGRAMS AND INITIATIVES**

#### New FIC-Gates Foundation Partnership

FIC received a grant from the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation for \$641,232 to develop a novel methodology to define diarrhea disease burden using remote sensing technology and to develop policy evaluation tools of prevention strategies. The work will be conducted and led by FIC’s Division of International Epidemiology and Population Science.

### Frameworks Program for Global Health

There was an enthusiastic response from the academic community to the announcement of the Frameworks Programs for Global Health. Of the applications received on April 18, about 20% were from foreign institutions. NIAID will conduct the review of the applications, tentatively scheduled for early July, for consideration at the September FIC Advisory Board. FIC anticipates making approximately 10 awards (including planning grants) with FY05 funding. The National Institute of Dental and Craniofacial Research is a partner on this program announcement. <http://www.fic.nih.gov/programs/framework.html>

### FIC Launches the Behavioral FIRCA

The Fogarty “International Research Collaboration- Behavioral, Social Sciences” Research Award (FIRCA-BSS), launched in March 2005, facilitates collaborative behavioral and social science research between scientists supported by the National Institutes of Health (NIH) and investigators in developing countries. As with the companion Basic Biomedical FIRCA Program, the main objectives of the FIRCA-BSS program are to: (1) support collaborative research efforts between NIH-funded scientists and developing country scientists on research of high scientific merit, relevant to global health and of mutual interest and benefit; and (2) help build research capabilities and foster further sustained and productive research and research collaborations at the foreign site.

### FIC/Ellison Program Makes New Gains

The Fogarty-Ellison Fellowships in Global Health and Clinical Research, supported by FIC, The Ellison Medical Foundation and NCMHD has gained two new partners—NIDA and NIAID—and expanded to include 27 U.S. students, up from 20 in its first year. The program has also increased the number of participating foreign sites beyond the original 14 institutions in Botswana, Brazil, Haiti, India, Kenya, Mali, Peru, South Africa, Thailand, Uganda, and Zambia to include one in St. Petersburg Russia and other locations. The program pairs U.S. students with students from the host country and provides early career opportunities for U.S. and developing country graduate students in the health professions to participate in one year of mentored clinical research at an NIH-funded research center in a developing country. The Association of American Medical Colleges and the Association of Schools of Public Health provide critical support for the effort at all stages of recruitment, review and matching.

### Brain Disorders in the Developing World: Research Across the Lifespan

The second competition in the Brain Disorders in the Developing World program was announced in May 2005. This program will support collaborative research projects relevant to developing nations and will involve investigators in developed and developing countries. The collaborative research programs are expected to contribute to the long-term goal of building sustainable research capacity in developing countries to address neurological/ neuro-developmental (including sensory, motor, cognitive and behavioral) function and impairment throughout life. The Canadian Institutes for Health Research signed on again as a co-sponsor and partner in this program, as did the NINDS and other NIH Institutes.



## Disease Control Priorities Project (DCPP): Timeline, Schedule and Milestones Met

All 73 chapters and Foreword completed; 63 chapters in final form, being set in galley proofs by Oxford University Press/World Bank Publishers; about 20 Working Papers published and 15 in pipeline; research agendas of all chapters being inventoried and synthesized by Harvard School of Public Health and DCPP; grant for strategic communications and dissemination activities being finalized by Population Reference Bureau for submission to the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation; launch of book and scientific program to occur in Beijing, April 2-6, 2006 in conjunction with DCPP partners and IOM, NAS, Inter-Academy Medical Panel, and Chinese Academy of Engineering and Chinese Academy of Science.

### Review and Evaluation

On May 2<sup>nd</sup> - 4<sup>th</sup>, 2005 a team of 6 experts came to the NIH to review the first five years of the International Bioethics Education and Career Development Award Program (IBECDA). Utilizing the FIC framework for evaluation (which can be found on the FIC website [http://www.fic.nih.gov/about/eval\\_framework.pdf](http://www.fic.nih.gov/about/eval_framework.pdf)), the experts interviewed 36 persons associated with the program and then came to consensus regarding recommendations for the program. While the report of the review, with its recommendations will only be available in mid-June, the panel of experts found that the Program has made substantial progress in achieving the program's goals. In its first five years, the Bioethics program has trained 167 long term (2 PhDs, 52 Masters, 52 non-degree certificates and 61 non-degree diplomas) 1,265 short term and 141 medium term trainees. Trainees have come from 37 developing countries and produced a total of 81 publications and 54 presentations. Almost all long-term trainees (98%) have returned to their country of origin following training. In addition to completing the bioethics report in June, the FIRCA outcome evaluation is also due to be finalized and the report is due out at the end of June.

Phase II of the trainee tracking system (a recommendation of both the bioethics and population reviews) was approved by OD and awarded to FIC Devis in April. The system, developed in Phase I, was beta tested with eight PIs from various training programs and was presented to the AITRP administrators at the recent AITRP network meeting in NY. It is expected to be completed early in '06. A phase II outcome evaluation of the AITRP program is currently in progress with site visits being planned for later this year. The AITRP outcome evaluation is expected to be completed in early '07. We are in the midst of planning a review of the Ecology of Infectious Disease program, which will take place at the NIH in July '05.

### Gender and Globalization

FIC is hosting the visit of Dr. Ilona Kickbush, Senior Advisor on Health Policy, Federal Office of Public Health, Bern, Switzerland to campus between May 23 and 25. The purpose of the visit is to learn more about gender and globalization efforts around the world, and to share information on global public health as related to gender issues. Other ICs will meet with Dr. Kickbush during her visit. The FIC Advisory Board will hear a presentation on this topic at the May 24 meeting.

## ON THE INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS FRONT

### World Health Assembly

FIC provided leadership and support to NIH in preparation for this year's World Health Assembly in Geneva, May 16-25. This was Secretary Leavitt's first international trip.

### Working with our Partners to the North

During the week of May 16, several **Scientific Directors from the Canadian Institutes for Health Research** visited Fogarty and NIH Institutes to discuss existing and potential partnerships. Among the CIHR leaders were Dr. Jeffrey Reading, Scientific Director, Institute for Aboriginal Peoples' Health; Dr. Rod McInness, Scientific Director, Institute for Genetics; and Dr. Remy Quirion, Scientific Director, Institute for Mental Health and Neuroscience. During the three-day visit, numerous meetings took place to consider nanomedicine (involving NEI, NINDS, NIMH, and other ICs); indigenous peoples research (involving NCHMD and FIC); and genetics (involving NHGRI and others).

FIC and CIHR have identified potential ways forward in the area of indigenous people's research. This area was identified by NIH Director Dr. Zerhouni and CIHR Director Dr. Bernstein as a priority. Last year, NIH and CIHR signed a Letter of Intent aimed at strengthening cooperation in this area.

FIC convened a scientific panel to review **US-Egypt joint fund** proposals. Every year, the State Department provides funds to support small grants involving US and Egyptian scientists. This fund allows significant leveraging of NIH support and provides new opportunities for US scientists to begin to work with colleagues in Egypt.

The FIC is the designated DHHS lead in the **Arctic Council and the Interagency Arctic Research Policy Committee (IARPC)**. As such, FIC is working on plans to collaborate with other NIH Institutes and DHHS agencies to pursue priorities in the Arctic Human Health Initiative, a key component of US plans to support International Polar Year. The priorities for action include: infectious disease, the effects of anthropogenic pollution, UV radiation, and climate variability on human health, and telehealth innovations. Other opportunities for trans-NIH and interagency collaboration (e.g., with NSF, NASA, etc.), such as mental health are being explored. FIC is working with the National Institute of Mental Health (NIMH), the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration (SAMHSA) and others to plan a symposium focusing on suicide prevention in the Arctic as part of the next conference of the International Association of Suicide Prevention, which will take place in Durban, South Africa in September 2005. It is expected that the outcomes of the symposium will provide input for the 13<sup>th</sup> International Congress on Circumpolar Health, to be held in Novosibirsk, Russia in June 2006 as a "Gateway to IPY."

The **Arctic Human Health Initiative (AHHI)** is intended to advance the joint research agenda of the Arctic Council, an eight-nation intergovernmental forum for sustainable development and environmental protection, in the areas of infectious disease, the effects of anthropogenic pollution, UV radiation, and climate variability on human health, and telehealth innovations. In

addition, the AHHI will draw on the outstanding leadership of the Arctic Council member states' national and international research programs in the areas of human genomics, hypothermia/hibernation, and health impacts of climate change (including spread of zoonotic and arboviral diseases in the Arctic).

FIC participated in the **IPY Arctic Human Health National Advisory Committee** meeting on February 8, 2005, hosted by CDC's Arctic Investigations Program. The purpose of the meeting was to develop an U.S. National Arctic Human Health Initiative (AHHI) agenda for IPY and identify opportunities for potential circumpolar collaboration and activities. The attendees at the meeting included representatives of the University of Alaska (Anchorage and Fairbanks), the University's Institute for Circumpolar Health Studies, the International Union for Circumpolar Health/American Society for Circumpolar Health, CDC/NIOSH (Alaska), Department of State, National Academy of Sciences' Polar Research Board, the State of Alaska (Division of Public Health and AK State House Representative), and several NGOs and Alaska Native health organizations (e.g., Southcentral Foundation, Northern Forum).

#### Working with Partners in the Americas

**Mentoring Junior Women Scientists--** Gloria Bonder, Director of the Gender, Society and Policy Division, Latin American Institute for Advanced Studies in Social Sciences, FLACSO and the Argentina and UNESCO Regional Chair, Women, Science and Technology in Latin America, visited FIC March 28 – April 1, 2005 to develop an electronic mentoring program for junior women scientists in Latin America. The outcome of discussions with the FIC Acting Director and Dr. Ana Chepelinsky, Program Director for the Americas was the development of the “Virtual Program for Career Development and Capacity Building for Latin American and Caribbean Junior Women Scientists as a partnership between FIC, the NIH and UNESCO Regional Chair, Women, Science and Technology in Latin America. The main purpose of this program is to create a virtual and highly interactive space that offers mentoring, networking and training activities aimed at improving the skills and capacities for professional development and leadership of junior Latin American women scientists in their disciplines and institutions. The program design takes advantage of the academic and technical expertise of FIC and the UNESCO Chair in using novel information and communication technologies for educational and networking activities. The program explores the potential of “Eluminate”, a web video conferencing and electronic-learning software, currently being used by Fogarty grantees and the technological and pedagogical expertise of the UNESCO Chair in producing and conducting electronic-learning programs on gender and science issues.

**The International Workshop on Environmental Health in Latin America: Developing a Gender Perspective** was held at Hermosillo, Sonora, Mexico on February 13-15, 2005. The workshop, sponsored by FIC and NIEHS, was organized by two FIC grantees, Dr. Sioban Harlow, University of Michigan and Dr. Catalina Denman, Dean of the Colegio de Sonora. The workshop successfully brought together leading researchers and policy makers to further the development of a substantive gender perspective in environmental health research in Latin America, to facilitate the creation of networks and communities of practice to enable the mainstreaming of gender in environmental health research, policy, and programs and to identify strategies for improving leadership opportunities for women in environmental health sciences in Latin America.

**Brazilian-NIH Alumni Association--** Dr. Ricardo Gazzinelli of the Brazilian Academy of Sciences met with selected FIC staff to provide an update on the organization and governance body of the newly formed “Brazilian NIH Alumni Association, sponsored by FIC and NIEHS. FIC staff was latter joined by 20 NIH Visiting Fellows to address the role of the Alumni Association in facilitating their return to Brazil after completing their postdoctoral training at NIH.